A Customer’s Story on Using Strict Naming Conventions instead of Classes in RetailEdge

Blog · https://retailedge.com/docs/a-customers-story-on-using-strict-naming-conventions-instead-of-classes-in-retailedge

A very well-informed response from one of our customers, Janet Shelton, on how she manages her departments.

“I don’t use class much, though I thought I would when you added it. Instead, I use a strict system of rules.

The SKU is the first 2 initials of the vendor name, a hyphen and the vendor #. Example:

CB-E141-GLMN (vendor=Clara Beau)

This causes the data to sort the vendor together and all in alphabetical order. (Vendor ID does not put vendors in order, just groups by vendor).
In the example above (CB-E141-GLMN), all the E141 earrings sort together, then in order by metal and then by the color #.

If the item is being discontinued, I add an X in front of the SKU, and if inventory goes to 0, that X changes to Z. This causes those to sort to the bottom. I don’t immediately delete the Z item because sometimes more are found or something causes me to change my mind. For markdowns, I add a 1 and a data code, causing them to sort to the top so I can more closely monitor them.

Using the vendor # has several advantages:

It puts the data in the order the packing list and invoice will usually be in.
It causes the items to sort the way the vendor designed their vendor numbers, which also is helpful. For example, the fact that the vendor started with E causes all the earrings to sort together. Then the sort is by the earring style (141 in this example).

Next I describe the item, going from general to specific. That is important because sometimes you will want to look at all the items of the same type, such as all hats, and that is an easy way to quickly them without doing a sort.

Ear G enamel lemon green E141-G lmn

That’s Earring gold enamel color vendor ID.

This causes all the earrings to sort together and within that sort, all the gold, silver, etc. to sort together.

The vendor ID is repeated so it will appear on the label for matching purposes.

A good description usually reduces the # of classes needed. For example:

Tee XX M long white sm YYY translates to Tee shirt, brand initials, sleeve description, color, size vendor #

If the descriptors are too long, they can be abbreviated, but the abbreviation must be consistent throughout the data base.

Also, this method helps cashiers when they have to search for an item. The data is automatically ordered in a way that makes items easier to find.

That’s the basics of it, and every database will need to be managed differently. Developing strict naming conventions is extremely helpful. It allow me to read reports at a glance and find what I want to understand. If that doesn’t work, time to rethink my departments and use classes. For example, as jewelry became a bigger part of my business, it was broken down to earring, bracelets and necklaces/set.”

Janet

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